

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MAPUTO 0843

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FROM LOW

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK, US
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: GRAHAM/LOW CONVERSATION WITH CHIKEREMA

1. BEFORE LEAVING SALISBURY GRAHAM
AND I LUNCHEd ALONE WITH CHIKEREMA. HE STARTED OFF
WITH A HARD LINE POSITION DEFENDING THE INTERNAL
SETTLEMENT. ELECTIONS, HE SAID WOULD BE HELD AND
POWER TRANSFERRED ON DECEMBER 31. IN THE MEANTIME
THOUGH SOME VIOLENCE MIGHT CONTINUE IT WOULD DECREASE
TO THE POINT THAT CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR THE
ELECTIONS WOULD BE CREATED. THE REGIME INTENDED TO DO AWAY
WITH DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATION VERY SHORTLY.

2. CHIKEREMA REJECTED OUR EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN
ABOUT THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE AND THE REGIME'S ABILITY
TO HOLD AN ELECTION WHICH THE WORLD WOULD CONSIDER AN
UNEQUIVOCAL EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR THE INTERNAL
SETTLEMENT AND NEW LEADERSHIP. HE LISTENED CARE
FULLY, HOWEVER, AS WE DESCRIBED THE ADVANTAGES WHICH
ALL PARTY TALKS MIGHT HOLD FOR HIM AND THE OTHER
PARTICIPANTS IN THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT. WE SAID THAT
THE SALISBURY GROUP WOULD APPEAR TO BE SEEKING A REASONABLE
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SOLUTION AND WILLING TO MEET WITH ITS OPPONENTS.
IF THEY WERE ACCOMMODATING THEN A SETTLEMENT MIGHT BE
REACHED WHICH WOULD END WAR AND SANCTIONS AND BRING
INTERNAL STABILITY. IF THEY WERE INTRASIGENT
THEN THE WORLD WOULD KNOW IT AND SYMPATHY AND UNDER
STANDING OF THEIR POSITION WOULD NO DOUBT GROW.

3. CHIKEREMA EXPRESSED HIS SKEPTICISM THAT HIS COUSIN (ROBERT MUGABE) WOULD AGREE TO TALK OR IF HE DID SO WOULD ACCEPT A REASONABLE SOLUTION. NKOMO, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS SOMETHING ELSE. CHIKEREMA ASKED WHETHER IT MIGHT NOT BE HELPFUL FOR SOMEONE TO MEET WITH HIM ALONE. WE SAID WE WOULD HOPE THAT THERE WOULD BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR VARIOUS KINDS OF INFORMAL CONTACTS AT THE ALL PARTIES MEETING. HE PROMISED TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL FOR AN UNPUBLICIZED MEETING OF PRINCIPALS AND WE AGREED TO BE IN CONTACT AGAIN NEXT WEEK.

4. CHIKEREMA SAID THAT COME WHAT MAY HE WOULD INSIST ON ELECTIONS BEING HELD IN NOVEMBER/DECEMBER. THE SUGGESTION THAT THEY BE POSTPONED OR ELIMINATED HAD BEEN CONSIDERED LAST WEEK AND REJECTED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. AS LONG AS HE WAS INVOLVED, ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD AND DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATION REPEALED. DE PREE

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